



## 2012 Alexandria's Top Ten Environmental Accomplishments

*Accomplishments include the permanent closure of the GenOn power plant, highest-ever solid waste recycling rate of 48.4%, new hybrid trolleys and buses operated by DASH, launch of Capital Bikeshare's eight bikeshare stations in Old Town, construction of several bicycle and pedestrian trails, installation of solar photovoltaic panels at Beatley Library, Witter Fields and ARenew, continuing success of the Green Building Policy, sustainable construction practices at ARenew, development of 20 environmental indicators to measure Eco-City progress, and City's recognition at the highest level (Platinum Level) by the Virginia Municipal League (VML) as part of its Green Government Challenge.*

### **Permanent Closure of the GenOn Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS) as of October 1, 2012 –**

The permanent closure of this outdated coal-fired power plant marks a significant milestone for the City of Alexandria and its residents. For several years, this plant has been the single largest air pollutant source in the Northern Virginia region. At the peak of its production during the period 2001-2003, this power plant emitted some 15,000 tons of sulfur dioxide, 6,000 tons of nitrogen oxides and 600 tons of PM<sub>10</sub> annually. In addition, it emitted about 2.5 million tons of carbon dioxide annually. The electricity produced by this plant can be replaced by more efficient power plants using cleaner fuels such as natural gas or renewable energy sources, resulting in significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere.

**Highest-Ever Solid Waste Recycling Rate** - The City reported its highest ever recycling rate of 48.4% to the Virginia DEQ for CY 2011. This significant increase over last year's reported 41.4% recycling rate was due primarily to significant increases in overall recycling collections. The City also partnered with a local non-profit foundation to recycle 110 tons of electronic items including 2,271 televisions and computer monitors. City residents dropped off 38,000 Gallons of Toxic Waste during 2012 thanks to the extended open hours of the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center. The material is reprocessed for fuel, incinerated, or land-filled at Environmental Protection Agency approved facilities located outside of Alexandria.

**Capital Bikeshare Established** – The City launched its participation in the Capital Bikeshare Network with the installation of eight bikeshare stations in the Old Town area. Capital Bikeshare Network is the largest bikeshare system in the country, with over 180 stations in the region, and more than 1,600 bicycles. Using Capital Bikeshare is an easy, environmentally-friendly and healthy way to get around Alexandria and enjoy the historic landscape of the city.

**Alexandria Transit Company's New DASH Buses and Trolleys** - In April 2012, Alexandria Transit Company (ATC), the operator of DASH, took over operation of the King Street Trolley using five brand new 30-foot low-floor hybrid electric trolleys. The new and improved King Street Trolley has been a great success since its launch on April 22, 2012, and continues to gain in popularity. Since ATC started operating the King Street Trolley, monthly ridership has grown significantly, increasing over 65%, between May and September 2012. Riders are enjoying the comfort and quiet of the new trolleys, along with the reliable service and customer friendly drivers. In November 2012, ATC took delivery of ten new 40-foot hybrid electric low floor transit buses. With these new buses, over 30% of DASH's fleet is powered by hybrid electric drive train.

**Solar Photovoltaic Systems Installed at Beatley Central Library and Other Alexandria Facilities** - Using funding from the Department of Energy EECBG program, the City and Alexandria Library worked jointly to complete installation of a solar photovoltaic system at the Beatley Central Library. Converting sunlight to electricity, the 42.3 Kilowatt system features 180 solar panels that spread across each of Beatley's five south-facing roof sections. Other installations of solar photovoltaic system include:

- The new restroom building at Witter Recreational Fields is the first park structure to include solar panels in the City.
- ARenew installed 40 solar panels on the roof of its main pump station building.

**Green Building Policy** - The Green Building Policy approved by City Council in 2009 has been successful in ensuring new developments commit to obtaining a minimum level of green building certification. Over the last year, some of the notable projects that have been reviewed per the policy and will obtain a green building certification include: three residential buildings totaling 492 units with ground floor retail (Landmark Gateway), a 69,000 ft<sup>2</sup> grocery store with 253 residential units (Giant in Potomac Yard), a 130,000 s ft<sup>2</sup> school (Jefferson Houston), a 370,000 ft<sup>2</sup> office building (IDA in Potomac Yard) and a 39,000 ft<sup>2</sup> fire station (Eisenhower Avenue Fire Station).

**Sustainable Construction at ARenew** - ARenew is currently going through a multi-phase facility upgrade called the State-of-the-Art Nitrogen Upgrade Program (SANUP) to enhance its ability to remove nitrogen from wastewater. As part of the program goals, it incorporated sustainable requirements directly into the construction contract documents, encouraging environmentally responsible behaviors and the use of green resources. Contractors are required to report their efforts on a monthly Sustainable Construction Log. The results for 2012 have been quite impressive with several green practices quantified.

**Environmental Indicators** - The City and Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission developed 20 environmental indicators that can be measured on a routine basis to quantify the progress made on the Eco-City initiative. One of the major findings from the first report on these indicators published in April 2012 was that increased participation and commitment from residents and businesses are essential to Alexandria's success in reducing GHG emissions.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Construction** – The City completed several bicycle and pedestrian projects in 2012 aimed at making bicycling and walking safer. The Charles Barrett Safe Routes to School Project completed construction in October 2012. The project included shortened pedestrian crossings through geometric reconfiguration of intersections by the school, sidewalk installation, and parking changes. In Jones Point Park, the Mount Vernon Trail has been constructed with new park and trail connections at North Royal Street linking North Royal Bike Route to Woodrow Wilson Bridge Trail. For the Dora Kelley Park Trail, an eco-friendly material has been used for trail surface.

**City of Alexandria Achieves VML Platinum Level Certification for the Fifth Consecutive Year** - For the fifth straight year, the City of Alexandria earned Platinum level certification, the highest level of recognition by the Virginia Municipal League (VML) as part of its Green Government Challenge. This certification by VML reaffirms the City's long term commitment to the Eco-City Alexandria initiative.